

March 26, 2009

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Ms. Creedon,

I applaud the Water Board's efforts to clean up the Rubicon Trail and to close it to motorized vehicles for part of the year. I have hiked and skied in the Desolation Wilderness and Twin Peaks areas, and feel the Entire Tahoe basin too spectacular to sacrifice to off-road vehicle recreation (let alone on-road vehicles), winter or summer.

While the Rubicon is a county road, it has become an unmanaged extreme off road vehicle park with severe impacts to the Trail and adjacent National Forest. The winter wet season closure of the Trail is a first major step that should be implemented immediately. The abuses of snow and wet season travel by 4x4 vehicles on this route is well documented by users' own photos. Over the snow travel on nearby USFS dirt roads is not allowed. Enforcing this one measure will go a long way toward eliminating a major cause of the ongoing resource damage with little to no cost to El Dorado County. Gates are a simple proven form of enforcement. Other measures which would be helpful include:

- 1) Restore the trail to a narrow historic street legal 4x4 route. Take steps to fix the damage already inflicted.
- 2) Adopt an Operations and Maintenance Plan.
- 3) Require cleanup of all oil spills and carry out of all human waste.
- 3) Install, maintain, and monitor erosion control measures to ensure no damage is done to water quality.
- 4) Eliminate the use of extreme vehicles. These are causing most of the damage. Restrict use to street-legal vehicles only.
- 5) Use permits, fees, and quotas to protect the Trail. The Forest Service limits use in Desolation through a quota system and a permit fee; why can't the County do the same for the Rubicon Trail?

Thank-you,



D. Guy Ayers